

WHAT IS THE IOWA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND?

The Iowa Commission for the Blind is the State Agency responsible for providing all services to the blind of Iowa except public assistance (or welfare) payments and education of blind children.

WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC PROGRAMS OF THE IOWA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND?

Vocational Rehabilitation is the program designed to help the blind achieve self-support. Commission rehabilitation counselors help blind Iowans get the training they need and then assist them in finding jobs. One of the Commission's major efforts is to try to educate the public to the fact that the blind are not helpless but are simply normal people who cannot see — that is, if they get proper training and if they have an opportunity to work. Many totally blind persons are working every day as machinists, lawyers, farmers, factory workers, electricians, and scientists. With proper training a blind person can be a successful housewife, school teacher, or almost anything else.

Independent Living Rehabilitation is a program designed to enhance the ability of blind persons to live independently and function within family and community.

Library services are available to the blind of the State and to those who, because of a physical handicap, are unable to read ordinary print. The Commission provides talking book records. Braille books, books recorded on cassette and open reel tape and large type books. These are sent through the mail postage free. Also, the Commission can lend talking book and cassette machines which play recorded books and magazines. There are both reading rooms and listening rooms at the Commission building in Des Moines. A blind person can come in and browse and do reference work.

Orientation and Adjustment Training to provide the specific skills and techniques of blindness and to introduce blind persons to new attitudes about blindness is carried on in the Center at Fourth and Keosauqua in Des Moines. From all parts of Iowa blind adults come to the Center to learn the positive attitudes and alternative techniques that enable a blind person to carry on a normal, independent, and competitive life.

Home Industries is a work program for blind persons who cannot work in competitive industry because of age or some other reason.

Distribution of Special Tools, Aids, and Devices is carried on by the Commission for the Blind to assist the blind person achieve self-sufficiency. The items vary from Braille watches and clocks to white canes to special insulin syringes. A blind person may purchase these at the Commission's cost. When there is a clearly demonstrated need and the blind person is unable to pay, the Commission (within the limits of its resources) provides the item without charge.

ARE THERE PRIVATE GROUPS OR ORGANIZATIONS IN IOWA ENGAGED IN WORK FOR THE BLIND?

Yes, Lions Clubs through the state carry on a variety of projects to assist the blind, as do the Federated Women's Clubs. There are several groups (including the women of the Jewish Temple Sisterhoods), who transcribe material into Braille and also do tape recordings of books for the blind. The Iowa Telephone Pioneers of America are working with the Commission to distribute and repair talking book and cassette machines and to give other services to blind persons throughout the state. Also, the blind themselves have formed organizations with membership throughout the state, which carry on programs of public education and otherwise attempt to find solutions to the problems which face the blind. These groups include the Iowa Association of the Blind, the Iowa Braille and Sight-Saving School Alumni Association, The Iowa Council of the Blind, The National Federation of the Blind of Iowa, and the Tri-State Independent Blind Society.

WHAT IS THE COST OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND?

No fees are charged for Commission services, which are supported by state and federal funds. The Commission urges all who need its services or wish further information about it to contact the central office at 4th and Keosauqua Way, Des Moines, Iowa 50309 (Telephone 515-283-2601).

The Commission also maintains district offices in Sioux City, Waterloo, and Cedar Rapids and has other staff members working in every county of the state. One may call the Des Moines office from Iowa locations outside the city toll-free at (800) 362-2587.

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BRAILLE ALPHABET AND NUMBERS USED BY THE BLIND

a	b	c	d	e	f	g
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
h	i	j	k	l	m	n
8	9	0				
o	p	q	r	s	t	u
v	w	x	y	z	,	.
Capital sign		Number sign			?	

The Braille System is comprised of signs formed
by the use of all the possible combinations of 6 dots
numbered and arranged thus:

1	4
2	5
3	6

Letters are capitalized by prefixing dot 6. The first
ten letters preceded by the number sign represent
numbers. Punctuation marks are formed in the lower
part of the cell.

In addition to ordinary print the Braille System
provides for the writing of foreign languages, musi-
cal scores, mathematical and chemical notations, and
other technical matter.

T h i s i s



